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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 003628

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SUBJECT: IRAQ'S COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES APPROVES
CONSTITUTION REVIEW COMMITTEE AND PROCEEDS ON REGIONS LAW

Classified By: (U) Classified by Political Counselor Margaret Scobey for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Iraq's Council of Representatives (CoR) approved the membership of the Constitution Review Committee (CRC) and conducted the first reading of the region formation law September 26, despite efforts by members of Sunni parties Hewan and National Dialogue Council to disrupt the reading. Tawafuq (Sunni bloc) member Dhafer al-Ani resigned his governorates committee chairmanship before the reading started. The actual reading went smoothly, but the theatrics that preceded it exposed divisions within the Shia Coalition and Tawafuq. It is still unclear whether Tawafuq and the Sadrists are merely posturing and will eventually participate in region formation law and CRC deliberations. END SUMMARY.

Constitutional Committee Formed

¶2. (SBU) Per the agreement reached on September 24 and announced September 25, the CoR approved the membership of the CRC September 26. The committee contains 27 members: 12 Shia Coalition, 5 Kurdish Alliance, 4 Tawafuq, 2 Iraqiyya (secular, cross-sectarian), 1 Hewan, 1 Turkman, 1 Christian, and 1 Yezidi:

Shia Coalition

- ¶1. Ali Al Alak - Dawa
- ¶2. Najiha Abdal Amir al-Habib - Dawa (FEMALE)
- ¶3. Abd al-Kareem al-Anzi - Dawa Tanzeem
- ¶4. Sami al-Askari - Shia Independent
- ¶5. Abbas al-Bayati - Shia Independent
- ¶6. Qassim Daoud - Shia Independent
- ¶7. Hassan Al-Shemmari - Fahdila
- ¶8. Humam Hammoudi - SCIRI
- ¶9. Jalalaldin Al-Sagheer - SCIRI-Badr
- ¶10. Jaber Habib Jaber - Shia Independent
- ¶11. Abd al-Kareem al-Naqib - SCIRI
- ¶12. Amer Thamer al-Karam - Shia Independent

Kurdish Alliance (KAL)

- ¶13. Fouad Masoum - PUK
- ¶14. Saadi Barzinji - KDP
- ¶15. Feriad Mohammed Rwandzi - PUK
- ¶16. Abdullah Salih Salih - KDP
- ¶17. Ahmed Anwar Othman - Kurdistan Labor Party (KLP)

Tawafuq

- ¶18. Ayad al-Sammaraie - IIP
- ¶19. Hussein al-Falluji - IPC
- ¶20. Salim al-Jeboori - IIP
- ¶21. Izz al-Din al-Dawla - Independent

Iraqiyya

- ¶22. Hameed Majeed Mousa - Iraqi Communist Party
- ¶23. Aliya Naseif al-Ubeidi (FEMALE)

Hewar

- ¶24. Muhammad al-Daini

Minorities

- ¶25. Yunadem Kena - Rafidayn - representing Christians (disputed)
- ¶26. Ameen Farhan (Yezidi)
- ¶27. Saad Al-Din Mohammed Amin - Iraq Turkmen front - representing Turkmen (disputed)

Members React

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¶3. (SBU) There was disagreement on the representatives for the Christian community and the Turkmen, since the CoR members from these communities had not met and selected the representatives. Kurdistan Islamic Union (KIU) CoR members Muhammad Ahmed Mahmoud and Sami al Atroshi unsuccessfully repeated their demand for a KIU representative on the committee since they are an independent party and not part of the Kurdish Alliance. Iraqiyya member Maisoon Damlouji complained about the lack of female representation (there are just two members). Shia independent Hanin al-Qeddo also noted the lack of a Shabak (a northern minority group) representative on the committee.

Heated Debate Precedes Region Formation Law

¶4. (SBU) Before the governorates committee could begin the first reading of the region formation law, Hewar member Muhammad al-Daini asked permission to speak, and began to shout and wave a copy of the draft Kurdistan regional constitution, alleging that the document calls for the annexation of Kirkuk and Ninewa. KAL bloc leader Fouad Masoum replied that this is just a draft and that the final version will comply with the Iraqi Constitution. Al-Daini was joined by Tawafuq members Hussein al-Falluji (IPC) and Abd al-Nasr al-Janabi (National

Dialogue) who also began to verbally attack the Kurds. Some Kurdish members started to react, but bloc leaders Fouad Masoum and Saadi Barzinji imposed order, with Barzinji walking the aisles motioning for quiet. Although their microphones were silenced, al-Janabi and al Daini continued to yell, and eventually left the room in protest, but not before calling on Tawafuq to leave the room and "not betray the people."

15. (SBU) After things quieted down, Chair of the Governorates Committee Dhafer al-Ani announced his resignation as chair, saying he could not chair a committee that is "working toward the division of Iraq." The Speaker appointed deputy chair Nada al-Sudani (Dawa - Shiite) as acting chair, and she read the Shia Coalition (SCIRI) version of the law with the added clause stating the law would only go into effect 18 months after CoR approval (NOTE: The version that was read has some differences from the September 7 Shia Coalition version. END NOTE). Al-Sudani explained that the committee had not received any other version of the law except the Shia Coalition version. Tawafuq member Salim al-Jeboori said the second reading will include input from the other two versions submitted.

COMMENT

16. (C) The naming of the CRC and the first reading of the region formation law are the first steps implementing compromises between the political parties that led to the September 24 agreement. The agreement states that decisions of the committee will be made by consensus rather than by voting, and that the entire CRC

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process shall not exceed one year (from the time the committee starts to the time the referendum results are announced). Tawafuq has officially demanded that they be able to appoint the chair of the committee, but no decisions have been taken on this issue. SCIRI chief of staff Haitham al-Husseini and SCIRI CoR member Ridha Jawad Taqi told PolOffs September 27 that Tawafuq member Salim al-Jeboori would be an acceptable Tawafuq candidate to chair the committee.

17. (C) The events in the CoR exposed fault lines in the Shia Coalition and Tawafuq. The Sadrists did not sign the September 24 agreement, did not attend the session, and have no representatives on the CRC. Some members of the Sunni Arab parties National Dialogue Council and the Iraqi Peoples Conference are accusing fellow Tawafuq members, particularly the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP), of committing

treason. It
remains to be seen if this is just posturing and these
seemingly
reluctant players can eventually be brought to the table to
participate
in the region formation law discussions and the CRC
deliberations.
KHALILZAD